

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

in the College of Arts & Sciences




KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY

www.kent.edu/geography/environmental-studies

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WHY ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES?

If you are fascinated by the natural world and worried about its long-term future, Environmental Studies is the right major for you!

Environmental Studies is among the most popular majors across the country. This major should appeal to undergraduate students who are interested in studying different aspects of the environment, who want to make a difference, who are eager to take on the environmental challenges that face every business, agency and institution, and who seek to be stewards of the earth's natural resources.

The degree will allow you to study different aspects of the environment, it will provide curricular flexibility, and should lead to solid job prospects.



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES VS. ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Although the two terms are often used together, environmental studies differs from environmental science.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES (OUR PROGRAM)

Environmental studies is a social science degree that looks to how humans influence and are influenced by the environment. An environmental studies degree incorporates ways in which traditions of cultures around the world affect the environment. It examines the social and political aspects of how people and the natural environment have interacted and continue to interact with one another.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

By contrast, the study of environmental science focuses mostly on the more technical aspects rather than the social aspects of various environmental issues.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSEWORK & SKILL SETS

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Studies provides students with a comprehensive understanding of environmental issues across multiple disciplines and gives them the means to communicate about these in several different ways.



In addition to three core courses in Environmental Studies, students will take courses in biological sciences, economics, geography, geology, history, philosophy, political science and sociology.

As a major, you will:

- Cultivate strong writing skills as you compose policy papers, research reports, case studies and essays
- Develop presentation skills while you share research findings and environmental perspectives with classmates and faculty
- Learn how to take a position on an issue and defend your stance
- Understand concepts in biology, geology, and physical geography
- Need both quantitative and qualitative skills to solve problems and interpret research data
- Become proficient in the human aspect of the environment, how people impact the natural world, and in interpreting this world for others

SOCIAL GOALS

Basic scientific knowledge about environmental processes is used to inform different social goals.

Graduates of the program will be able to:

- Understand the environment and how it relates to human activity, human resource needs and human perception
- Grasp the multiple interconnections between environmental and human systems when it comes to examining environmental problems
- Articulate how environmental problems are framed and how public attitudes and policies can be harnessed to provide solutions to environmental degradation



MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (B.A)

CORE REQUIREMENTS

BSCI 10110	Biodiversity (4)
ENVS 22070	Nature and Society (3)
GEO 21062	Environmental Earth Science (3)
ENVS 32091	Environ. Studies & Sustainability (2)
ENVS 42099	Integrative Senior Project (2)

NATURAL SCIENCE ELECTIVES

Choose one course from each discipline

Biological Sciences

BSCI 30277	Economic Botany (2)
BSCI 30360	General Ecology (4)
BSCI 30274	Forestry (3)
BSCI 40525	Wildlife Resources (3)

Geology

GEO 42065	Watershed Hydrology (3)
GEO 42067	Hydrogeology (3)

Geography

GEO 21062	Physical Geography (3)
GEO 41051	Natural Disasters and Society (3)
GEO 41066	Climate Change and its Impact (3)
GEO 41073	Conservation of Natural Resources (3)
GEO 41074	Resource Geography (3)

METHODS ELECTIVES

Choose one course from the following

GEO 49070	Geographic Information Science (4)
GEO 49230	Remote Sensing (3)
SOC 32210	Researching Society (3)
GEO 42035	Scientific Methods in Geology (3)
POL 30310	Public Policy Analysis (3)

SOCIAL SCIENCE ELECTIVES

Choose five courses from the following

ECON 32084	Economics of Environment (3)
GEO 31070	Population and Environment (3)
GEO 45085	Urban Transportation (3)
GEO 46065	Advanced Urban Geography (3)
GEO 46070	Urban and Regional Planning (3)
GEO 46080	Urban Sustainability (3)
PHIL 30025	Environmental Ethics (3)
POL 30350	Environmental Conflict Resolution (3)
POL 40440	US Environmental Politics (3)
POL 40450	Politics of Development (3)
SOC 42560	Sociology of Food (3)

UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS: 80-82

MINIMUM TOTAL CREDIT HOURS: 120



CAREER OPTIONS

INCREASING DEMAND

An increasing sense of global urgency has created a demand for environmental experts. Students earning environmental studies degrees may prepare for careers in fields like environmental planning and management, environmental law, education and more. Your ultimate career path will depend on your unique configuration of skills, interests and values.

Government

Environmental Studies careers are found at all levels of government, from municipal to state to federal.

Agencies

They will be found in many different agencies, such as Natural Resource Departments, EPAs, Transportation, and Parks.

Business and Industry

Environmental Studies jobs are found throughout business and industry, who need in-house experts to deal with government regulations and the public.

Non-Profits and Advocacy Groups

Environmental studies jobs are common to non-profit organizations and advocacy groups, such as the Nature Conservancy.

Environmental Studies is a broad field with many prospects!

CAREER DESCRIPTIONS

Just a few of the many professional careers that often begin with a B.A. in Environmental Studies include:

ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEY

If you are interested in pursuing a degree in Law, the knowledge gained as an Environmental Studies major is helpful for attorneys who work on environmentally related cases. Environmental attorneys interview expert witnesses like environmental engineers, biologists, chemists and environmental scientists as they prepare and litigate their cases. They interpret scientific material and evaluate the validity/reliability of those findings. They use advanced writing skills to compose legal briefs and other documents. They draft the language for environmental regulations if they work for governmental entities. In court, they tap presentation skills mastered by Environmental Studies majors.

ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION PLANNER

An environmental or conservation planner minimizes the environmental impacts of construction, navigates the environmental permitting process, reviews plans and overviews potential environmental effects or various projects. Environmental planners prepare environmental impact statements, assessments, and respond to proposal requests. Private sector environmental planners assist in the preparation of environmental projects and confirm that instructions adhere to environmental rules and regulations. Planners working for government agencies may recommend whether permits should be approved or denied. They are highly organized and possess proper leadership skills.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

Environmental consultants assess how development projects might impact the water, soil, air or wildlife in the area. All organizations must prepare environmental impact studies when they are planning to develop virgin land or repurpose currently developed land. Consultants suggest how to mitigate any potential impacts. Other jobs for consultants may be to recommend solutions to pollution issues. Environmental consultants require the communications skills to compose technical reports, to engage with the public and to deliver recommendations to clients.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR

Environmental Educators must synthesize available information about the surrounding environment and teach others about it. This can include education in a variety of settings, print or broadcast journalism, online media, and advocacy. Environmental Studies majors are trained to collect and interpret information and to conduct field work, all vital functions to their position as environmental educators. They convey their passion for the environment through engagement with visitors or students. The need for public speaking skills, acquired in the major, allows them to develop polished and dynamic presentations.



FUNDRAISER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES

Fundraisers rely on solid communication skills to compose letters and make pitches to prospective contributors. They orchestrate fundraising events and plan campaigns through all types of media. In targeting prospective donors for contributions to environmental causes, fundraisers embrace their organizations' goals and operations. Environmental Studies majors gain this knowledge and convey the benefits of supporting environmental initiatives to others.



NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGER

A natural resources manager serves as wildlife and plant life conservationist and can work in the public or private spheres. Natural resources managers who work for government agencies typically oversee and enforce environmental laws. Those who work in parks take charge of educational programs and tours for park visitors. This may also involve the preservation and sustainable management of park and forest lands. It includes the ecological maintenance of the parks, the management of park visitors, and the observation of their impact. Natural resource managers typically possess a degree in environmental studies or a related field and may have a masters for more advanced jobs. They also have a few years of experience and possess excellent communication and organizational skills.

PARK RANGER

Most park ranger positions involve education and interpretation. Rangers plan and conduct educational programs for the public on the science, culture, or history of a park, provide information about the park to guests at a visitors' center, conduct field trips to point out park highlights, maintain park structures and facilities, create educational displays, and write brochures. Many park rangers have degrees in environmental studies. A solid background in earth science, environmental science, and biology is important for work at many locations, as is an understanding of public policy and communication. This major can prepare students to become park interpreters, so that they can educate visitors about natural and scientific features.





POLICY ANALYST

Generating realistic proposals for environmental policy requires an in-depth knowledge of scientific concepts. Environmental Studies majors acquire solid foundations in biology and the geosciences. They have the research skills necessary to decipher information related to public policy recommendations. They have the analytical and statistical skills needed to interpret and process that information. Advanced technical writing skills are used to compose scientifically oriented policy documents.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Environmental organizations shape public perceptions to gain political influence and financial resources for their initiatives. Public relations specialists apply environmental knowledge to write press releases about programs and activities at their employer or client organizations. They utilize advanced writing skills to develop content for the websites of environmental organizations and to compose text for fundraising brochures and letters.

ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST

An environmental specialist helps with conducting environmental assessments, takes samples of various elements within an environment (water, soil, etc.) for testing, and takes part in the testing of the elements among other responsibilities. An environmental specialist is highly schooled in environmental law and policy with a bachelors degree in environmental studies or related field. For entry level positions as an assistant, little experience is required, as many people tend to learn on the job. Environmental specialists tend to be highly organized and excellent at written and verbal communication.

SUSTAINABILITY SPECIALIST

Organizations of all kinds are looking for greener ways of carrying out their functions. Sustainability specialists assess environmental practices and impacts, they recommend and implement strategies to conserve resources and seek to limit environmental damage. Sustainability specialists must assess the impact of current operations on the environment and to determine the potential value of alternatives. Sustainability specialists use writing, presentation and interpersonal skills to write proposals, organize projects, and urge colleagues to adopt alternative practices.



CONTACT

Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies

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